

COMMENDING THOSE FIGHTING WAR ON TERROR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 177, recognizing and commending people of freedom for having played such a crucial role in the ongoing success in the war on terror.

Mr. Speaker, people of freedom come in all different shapes and sizes. They do not come from one nation, but from all nations. They do not go to the same house of worship, but they all have hearts filled with hope. They do not all carry a rifle, they do not all go into battle, but every single man or woman who believes in freedom also believes we can leave this world just a little better than we found it.

Mr. Speaker, the success of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom is not just a plan, it is not just training, it is not just willpower or determination; it is all of that and much, much more. It is about young men and women who displayed heroism in the face of grave danger. It is about leaders who redefine the very nature of conflicts, it is about a disciplined military equipped with cutting-edge technology capable of delivering surgical strikes with razor-sharp precision. It is about a fighting force filled with compassion, a force capable of delivering the fist of justice and the outstretched hand of comfort at the same time.

I have heard some disturbing things lately, Mr. Speaker. I have heard that the conflict in Iraq was unjustified. I have heard that uncovering mass graves is somehow not a good enough reason for freedom in Iraq. I have heard that mobile bioweapons labs do not count as real evidence of weapons of mass destruction. I have heard that life under one of the most brutal regimes in history really was not all that bad. That is nonsense, pure nonsense. Furthermore, it is an insult to the brave men and women now returning home.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues to commend not only our troops but the entire military community, for without the people in the background, the encouragement of a family, the expertise of a scientist, the commitment of a President, the situation in Iraq today and in the free world's war against terror might be very, very different.

May God bless the men and women of our Armed Forces, and may he also bless those who give them aid and comfort.

Mr. Speaker, I call on all people of freedom to join us in celebrating our brave troops returning home. I ask them to join us in celebrating the liberation of the Iraqi people. While there is much work to be done, and while we will continue to bring justice to those who perpetrate terror, it is wholly appropriate to take this opportunity to congratulate our soldiers whose sweat

and blood has made freedom a reality for oppressed people around the world, as well as the communities who support them.

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And so, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in sending a clear message of thanks by voting in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 177.

REPUBLICAN TAX CUT LEAVES POOR FAMILIES BEHIND

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I received the following e-mail from one of my constituents. It says:

"Dear Janice Schakowsky, our government should stand for basic fairness and justice. That's why I do not understand why families earning between \$10,000 and \$26,000 per year would be excluded from receiving the \$400 per child tax refund that wealthier families will receive this summer just so millionaires can get bigger tax cuts. As a constituent, I ask you to please amend President Bush's unfair tax cut plan to include these poor families and their 12 million kids. To leave the tax cut as it is brings too much shame upon this great Nation. Sincerely."

My constituent is correct. This is a shameful moment in our great Nation, and we should not rest until we undo the tremendous wrong committed by the Republican leadership and the Bush administration. This is no time for business as usual. This is a time to reverse the damage done by the disgusting choices made by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle. There are those who may tell us that the decision to leave 12 million children in low-income working families on the cutting room floor was just a mistake, but that would be a lie. As The Washington Post editorialized yesterday, "Stiffing these children was not a last-minute oversight or the unfortunate result of an unreasonably tight \$350 billion ceiling." In fact, this was a deliberate, mean-spirited action committed in the name of protecting special interests instead of our Nation's children. In fact, a House Republican Ways and Means Committee spokesperson confessed that, "Well, adjustments had to be made."

Let us be clear about what happened. Behind closed doors, Republican leaders got together with the administration and decided who was going to be thrown overboard and who would be brought to shore. There were no Democratic Members in that room. There were certainly no children or working families in the room. And the decision was made to throw children and working families, including military families, overboard and to save the dividend

tax cuts for millionaires while restoring the ability of corporations to unpatriotically stash their profits in Bermuda. Compassion for millionaires and corporate traders, contempt for low-income children and their parents.

As Warren Buffett has said, "If this is class warfare, then my class is winning." There are other winners besides Warren Buffett. Not surprisingly, the Bush Cabinet members who worked so hard to sell this tax cut, job-killing bill are also winners. According to a report just completed by the Committee on Government Reform minority staff, Vice President DICK CHENEY, the President's key tax negotiator, will reap \$116,002 a year from the dividend/capital gains provisions in this bill. John Snow, Secretary of the Treasury, will get over \$332,000 a year. Donald Rumsfeld, who gave Vice President CHENEY's former company, Halliburton, a multi-million-dollar sweetheart contract, wins big, too, as much as \$604,000 a year. No wonder they all worked so hard to sell such a defective product.

We know who the winners are; and now we know at least some of the losers, 12 million children and working families. In my State of Illinois, nearly one in four children, 674,000 children in 378,000 families, were tossed aside so that Cabinet secretaries, billionaires, and corporations like Enron could be protected. We were not given time to read the Republican tax cut, job-killing bill before the vote; and I do not blame my colleagues for trying to push their bill through before we and the American public could learn what it included. I would be ashamed, too, if I decided to give Cabinet members, wealthy Members of Congress, and rich campaign contributors life jackets rather than women and children. And no wonder the Members on my side of the aisle were not given an opportunity to offer even one single amendment. What if we had learned the truth and tried to correct it?

Now we have learned the truth, and it is time to right an incredible wrong. Bob Herbert labeled this as a "quintessential example of what the Bush administration and its legislative cronies are about. The fat cats will get their tax cuts. But in the new American plutocracy, there won't even be crumbs left over for the working folks at the bottom of the pyramid to scramble after."

Now the actions of the Bush administration and Republican tax decision-makers are out in the open. And now it is our responsibility to act by passing the Rangel-DeLauro bill. Children and working families should be our first priority, not tossed out, given crumbs or thrown overboard. We must make the commitment to act this month.

IRAQ: WHAT NOW?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, a front-page story today in the Washington Post says, "Iraqi political leaders lashed out today at a plan by the top U.S. civilian administrator here to appoint an interim advisory council." The headline says, "Iraqis Assail U.S. Plans."

The front page of the Washington Times has a story today saying, "Unemployed Iraqi soldiers swarmed U.S. occupation headquarters yesterday demanding back pay and emergency payments of \$50 each and avowing vengeance if they didn't get their way."

We are in a real mess in Iraq. Since when did it become the obligation of U.S. taxpayers to pay the salaries of the Iraqi military? When in history has a victorious army had to start paying the salaries of the defeated army? We have already given the retired people on pensions in Iraq emergency payments, handing out two crisp \$20 bills to each, and probably more by now. Since when did it become the obligation of U.S. taxpayers to pay the pensions of Iraqi retirees? Those who support foreign aid found out many years ago that it was very unpopular so they just started putting our foreign aid and overseas spending into every Federal department and agency. The supporters of foreign aid very misleadingly say foreign aid is only about 1 percent of the Federal budget. What they do not say is that we are spending several hundreds of billions of dollars through every Federal department and agency.

I am very pro-military and pro-national defense. However, in many ways today we are turning the Defense Department into the biggest foreign aid agency there is. We were told a few weeks ago that the military is going to build or rebuild 6,000 schools in Iraq and set up a free basic health care plan for all Iraqi citizens. I heard one Member jokingly say that he was going to suggest changing the name of a small town in Wisconsin to the name Iraq so that town could qualify for the huge money that is about to be spent. We are told that the U.S. will spend \$200 to \$300 billion rebuilding Iraq over the next 10 years. This means \$20 to \$30 billion each year in a country where the gross domestic product last year was less than \$60 billion.

Our military did a great job in Iraq, as we all knew they would. But we spent over \$100 billion to defeat a country whose total military budget was only \$1.4 billion, about two-tenths of 1 percent of ours. Saddam Hussein was a very evil man, but Iraq was never any real threat to us, as this 3-week war proved. Now we are in a real mess.

Fortune Magazine, in its November 25 issue a few months before the war started, had an article entitled "Iraq, We Win, What Then?" That article said, "A military victory could turn into a strategic defeat. A prolonged, expensive American-led occupation could turn U.S. troops into sitting ducks for Islamic terrorists. All of that could have immediate and negative

consequences for the global economy." That is exactly what is happening today.

I heard one American general say on the news recently that the American military was not designed to be a police force. Yet that is exactly what we are doing in Iraq today. James Webb, a hero in Vietnam and President Reagan's Secretary of the Navy, wrote before the war: "The issue before us is not whether the U.S. should end the regime of Saddam Hussein but whether we as a Nation are prepared to occupy a territory in the Middle East for the next 30 to 50 years." He was one of many, many conservatives against this war.

Charley Reese, the very popular conservative columnist, wrote a column March 24 entitled "Congratulations" for becoming "the proud mamas and papas of 22 million Iraqis" since we will be providing them with so much. He then wrote:

"I have long been against taxing Americans to solve problems in foreign countries. It seems to me to be a simple proposition. Until an American politician can honestly say that all Americans are healthy and prosperous, that all children attend a clean, well-equipped school, that our entire infrastructure is up to speed, that all of our public health and environmental problems have been solved, then American tax dollars ought to be spent in the United States. I've read the Constitution I don't know how many times, but I never found anywhere in it that Congress can tax Americans and give the money to foreigners, but Congress does it, anyway."

Are true conservatives now for massive foreign aid? I do not think so. Are true conservatives for huge deficit spending? I do not think so. Are true conservatives for world government and the U.S. becoming the world's policeman? I do not think so. Yet we will spend all these many billions in Iraq because a few big multinational companies will make sure we do and because some government officials feel more important if they are placed in charge of other countries.

Charley Reese also wrote in that same column:

"We, of course, will get stuck with the bill and it will cost hundreds of billions of dollars. Some of the politicians' corporate cronies are already being promised lucrative contracts. There's always a profit to be made from war. You and I won't make it; the soldiers, sailors and airmen won't make it. No, as consumers we pay the price in treasure and blood and grief; the big corporations reap the profit."

In yesterday's Washington Post, a story said that some of the same Iraqis who are smiling at U.S. soldiers are harshly criticizing U.S. rule when the soldiers are not around. The Iraqi people hated Hussein, but the only ones who want us around are the ones we are paying.

We should get out of Iraq, Mr. Speaker, the sooner the better and not put

more American lives at risk. We should let Iraqis use their humongous oil wealth to rebuild their own country.

REPUBLICAN TAX CUT IS UNFAIR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, after the passage of the largest tax cut in history 2 years ago, the President began to talk about a little glitch in that, and a glitch that no one could have anticipated, not the Republican White House which wrote it, the Republican Senate which passed it, and the Republican House which passed it who deliberately wrote the glitch in, which was, gee, the estate tax would only expire for 1 year and then if you did not die during that 1 year, you would be subject to the full estate tax again. And a number of other taxes were phased back in.

Well, it was not a glitch. They knew about it. They had to do it so they would not bust the bank and that was when they were predicting a surplus. But guess what now? Whoops, here we go again. There is a little glitch in the second largest tax cut in American history passed at the time of the largest deficit in American history 2 weeks ago in the dark of the night, personally written and negotiated by Vice President CHENEY and the Republican leadership of the House and the Senate.

How could they have known that they left out half of the American people? I mean, after all, it was Ari Fleischer who said, "And, of course, for people in the 10 percent bracket, they benefit the most and that's the lowest income workers in America." He went on to say that it certainly does deliver tax relief to the people who pay income taxes. The President surrounds himself with waitresses. But unfortunately it is all a lie because those people are not going to get tax cuts under this bill. In fact, 51 percent of income-tax-paying Oregonians will get no cut under this bill and about 49 percent of income-tax-paying Americans will not get any cut under this bill. 7.6 million people who are in this 10 percent tax bracket that Mr. Fleischer referred to who were supposed to get a lot of benefits are going to get zero, zilch, nada under this bill. But every millionaire is guaranteed \$93,500 or more under this bill.

To even heap more irony on top of the injustice, the \$93,500 for each millionaire will come from FICA taxes, payroll taxes paid by wage-earning Americans. Wage-earning Americans pay about 7 percent of the first dollar they earn and every dollar they earn up to about \$88,000 on FICA tax. In fact, more than half of American workers pay more in FICA taxes to the Federal Government than they do income taxes. No relief for them. And, hey, guess what? We have really suckered you, because we are going to borrow every penny of the FICA taxes you